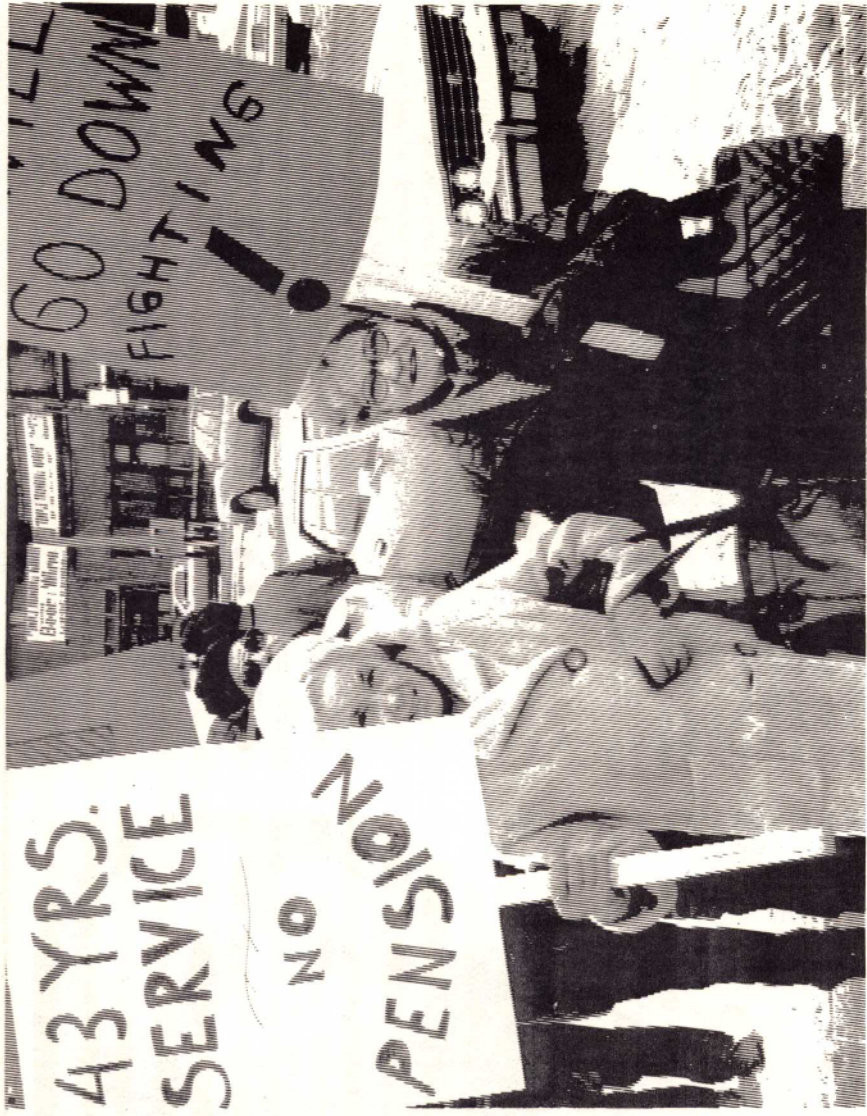




Rank and file Teamsters take matters into their own hands

by Paul Broz

Our people sell TDU with the idea that it's a rank and file movement, that it's nationwide, and that it's in its infancy right now. A grassroots movement, it takes people, time, energy, Teamsters. It takes people who are willing to fight and stand up and not take all this bullshit from the International. These officers who are receiving their \$150,000, \$200,000 salaries, we're tired of it, we want to end it. We want every Teamster to be aware, every Teamster to take a position, every Teamster to work to bring this union back to what it originally was." The words are Jim Watzek's, President of the Northern California Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU).

TDU is about rebuilding the union, by winning local elections, changing by-laws, pressuring union officers to defend workers' interests, and by helping rank and file Teamsters gain the self-confidence and experience to build a movement strong enough to accomplish the tasks it has set for itself.

In the midst of an economic crisis that is driving employers to put the screws to rank and file Teamsters, TDU is growing. Teamsters are saddled with a corrupt

union leadership less concerned with holding the line against the employers than padding their own pockets.

TDU was started by a handful of Teamsters, as Teamsters for a Decent Contract (TDC), in 1975, a few months before the last master freight agreement. It now has 3500 members in 35 chapters across the country, and has doubled in size in the last year. Most of its members are in the strongest, strategically most important sections of the union—truckers covered by national contracts. TDU's influence is greatest in large locals, in such places as Detroit, Flint, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Wisconsin, and Western Pennsylvania.

Although, in a union of 2.1 million members, TDU is still small, it is a national voice, if not a force. In some areas, TDU must be reckoned with. Ken Paff, 32, TDU National Organizer, and a Teamster for 7 years, says, "We have the demonstrated support of the majority of car haulers. All of our major contract resolutions have passed in all the big carhauling locals. The officials won't even dare to oppose us on these positions. In the largest car haulers local, Wilson Holsinger, the chief union official over the car haulers, tried to oppose our position

on cut rates. Not one person voted for it."

A rank and file slate, including TDU'ers, recently won all 7 offices in Local 332, in Flint, the second largest local among car haulers. Defeated incumbents, in one of these last official acts, voted themselves more than \$85,000 in severance pay.

In 200 recent local elections, reformers contested some 30 of them, many of these in the larger locals. In about 15 they won at least some positions. The aftermath of a rank and file victory over James Wheeler, in Jacksonville, Florida, is described in *Convoy*, TDU's national newspaper, which has a circulation of 55,000. "First Wheeler ruled all challengers ineligible at the October 5 nominations meeting. After that was overturned, and Wheeler lost, he filed a 24-point protest on the election he had just conducted. Then he appealed to Fitzsimmons to let himself continue in office while the protest continues. Failing that, he then brought internal union charges against Floyd [the winner], which he later withdrew. Then Wheeler postponed (illegally) the December 21st meeting of the local to prevent the new officers from being installed. Then on December 28, when 200-plus members showed up for the membership meeting (that had been postponed once already), they found the union hall locked... Wheeler has also reportedly double-billed the companies to collect February dues in advance and paid some handsome severance payments."

Another Teamster reform group, PROD (Professional Drivers Council) is growing. Started by Ralph Nader, its original purpose was to lobby in Washington. Under the influence of TDU, it, too, has begun grassroots organizing, and its candidates have won several elections. The 2 groups work together in some areas.

The union leadership, in concert with the U.S. Labor Party, a quasi-fascist group, has circulated leaflets accusing TDU and PROD of being financed by "illegal drug traffic." They have distributed letters forged on PROD stationery which state that PROD is out to destroy the Teamsters union, is a plot of independent truckers to bring about de-regulation, is backed by London bankers and the Kennedy family, and gets money from the National Right to Work Legal Foundation.

During the Flint election campaign, local officials put out leaflets in which pictures of rank and file oppositionists were draped with tenacles from an octopus wearing a hat with a hammer and sickle on it. One Teamster Secretary-Treasurer, Donald F. Wetzel, mailed out some U.S. Labor Party literature to the membership, along with a cover letter asking "please read this report, because it has some very interesting information in it." Other Teamster locals regularly distribute U.S. Labor Party literature.

Many of these tactics have backfired, according to Paff. "They tried to break up some meetings in Oklahoma City, brought some Business Agents, got people drunk and brought them to the meetings, but they lost the election. In Flint, they used heavy-handed slander tactics, put a lot of money into campaigns against TDU, and they lost. In other locals where they tried these things, they generally didn't fare very well."

The government has a long history of attempting to sabotage Black, women's, labor and left political groups. "If the government is involved in the U.S. Labor Party," claims Paff, "they're wasting their money."

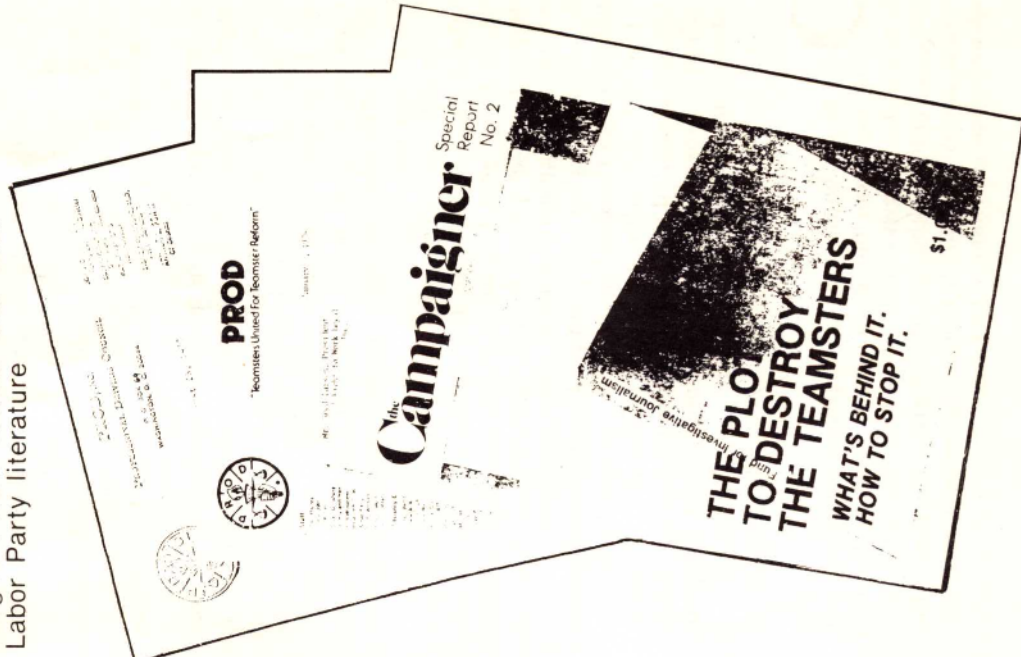
The master freight agreement, which expires March 31, is a national contract covering truck drivers and truck loaders. It was a creation of Jimmy Hoffa, who pulled local contracts together into one national contract, although some issues are still bargained locally. His base of support was in the Midwest and South, which had the worst wages.

The national contract was a step forward by the union, but Hoffa also forced *worse* conditions on some areas, such as Northern California. At one point, when employers in Oakland offered a 50 cent raise Hoffa told them that they could only offer 37½ cents, or he would strike them in other areas.

Teamsters covered by the master freight agreement in California still have slightly better working conditions, a situation employers want to change this time around. California carriers have seceded from Trucking Management, Inc., the national bargaining arm of the trucking industry, and hope to bargain separately, and settle lower.

The Teamster officialdom has yet to indicate if they will go along with this. TDU is pushing the International

Forged PROD letters and U.S. Labor Party literature



to refuse to sign any contract lower than the national contract.

A 1978 financial analysis by the Bank of America for the American Trucking Association reads, "In times of rising economic activity, the motor carrier industry outperforms the growth in the gross national product (GNP); however, when economic activity declines, the industry's performance quickly drops below the existing GNP level. This sensitivity to economic conditions accounts for the 'boom' or 'bust' cycles so often associated with the motor carrier industry."

The same report continues, "For motor carriers, labor is the single largest expense and typically absorbs 60% of gross revenues.... Some feel the Teamsters will demand a contract with increases above wage guidelines. The potential impact on the industry's financial condition, if a severe winter is followed by lengthy negotiations, will require management to exert increased control over operations." (emphasis added)

Fitzsimmons talked tough last year, saying, "The miners got 37% increases. You think I'm going to the tables for anything less? Somebody's got to be crazy!" He's since backed off, more recently stating, "If this program [wage guidelines] establishes some credibility on the price side and adjustments are made on the wage standard, I am sure that the 2 million Teamster members and their families will do their share to assist in resolving this difficult problem."

The Teamster leadership, left to its own devices could roll over and play dead. The latest issue of the *International Teamster* had one 6 inch story on the upcoming freight contract—just one month before expiration. Fitzsimmons has not given employers a 60 day notice to terminate the contract, instead giving notice to "modify and revise" the existing contract. Fitzsimmons stated, "This means there shall be no work stoppages in support of collective bargaining demands... unless such stoppage is authorized by the Teamsters National Freight Industry Negotiating Committee." His intent is to make local strikes less likely, rejecting the traditional stand of many unions of "no contract, no work." Locals which disobey Fitzsimmons could be open to large lawsuits.

"Changes in work rules and greater employee productivity will dominate the industry's negotiations with the IBT," says J. Curtis Counts, the chief industry negotiator for the master freight agreement. The Carter administration guidelines allow contracts over the 7% a year limit if they are coupled with productivity concessions to the employers.

Presently, contracts state that productivity systems cannot be instituted without the agreement of the locals involved, a provision that industry negotiators will push hard to eliminate.

One major battle over productivity standards has already been fought—a bitter, violent, 114 day strike against Safeway and other grocers in the San Francisco area. Although the strike is over, the productivity issue is still in arbitration, something many rank and filers consider a bad sign.



JIM WATZEK



KEN PAFF

Jim Watzek, a driver and steward at Safeway who went through the strike, describes the Methods Time Motion (MTM) productivity program now in arbitration. "At the end of World War II, the army set up a program of body movements. So many motions are made in bending, stooping, picking up an item. Each item weighs a certain amount, has a certain amount of resistance. They use all this to feed into a computer, which kicks back that it should take you so long to do so many items of said weight, sizes and so forth.

"We haven't got but about 1 or 2 men on the warehouse that's ever been able to meet production standards. They theoretically could fire everyone. The people's reaction, right now, is to work harder."

Watzek claims that after the MTM system was instituted in Los Angeles, the average age of warehouse workers dropped from 47 to 22. Productivity standards, says *Convoy*, "are a vicious system that pits young against old, weakens the union, and gives the company a way to get rid of those they want to."

Bay Area locals, in particular Local 315, have fought the MTM system "like a dog and cat." "The only obstacle," says Watzek, "is the International. They've made comments in the newspapers, in the *NorCal Teamster*, and through the International papers that this MTM system is not anti-Teamster, that it is probably the best thing that could happen to Teamsters."

Watzek has his own theory about why the International has refused to back them up. "At about 35 to 40 years old you're going to knock off half the people who can work in the warehouse. The pensions are going to go down to zero. There's going to be turnover in those jobs, which is going to mean new members coming in paying their initiation to the union... It's nothing but a kick in the ass for these bosses who have been ripping us off anyway."

Frank Fitzsimmons, President of the Teamsters, was paid about \$160,000 last year. Teamster dues supported 19 persons making over \$100,000 a year, in 1976, in 78 paid positions. That is *reported* income.

The Teamster Central States Pension Fund had \$332,658,997 in "questionable" loans on their books in 1975. A TDU booklet on pensions describes a few of these loans. "Pensaquitos is a 16,000 acre piece of land in San Diego county, California. \$150 million was loaned to Morris Shenker and his former business partner, Irvin Kahn, back in 1966. When Kahn died in September 1973 virtually nothing had been paid back, and the Fund took over the property, leaving Shenker's 20% ownership, but absolving him of all debts. Shenker is a St. Louis lawyer involved in some of the largest business frauds of the syndicate.

"Next to Pensaquitos in San Diego county is Rancho La Costa, a favorite golf and recreation spot for Frank Fitzsimmons, pension trustees, gangsters, and politicians. La Costa is owned by Moe Dalitz, Allan Roen, and other former Cleveland gangsters, who in 1949 moved to Las Vegas and later to San Diego. In 1968, they were joined by Wallace Groves and Herman Perl, who represent Meyer Lansky. Federal investigators believe more than \$40 million on the \$66.6 million Pension Fund loan has never been paid back."

An IRS audit of the Fund has indicated that as much as \$700 million could be missing. The Teamster *officers'* pension fund, on the other hand, is invested primarily in blue chip stocks—only 1% are in mortgages.

Paff says that rank and filers do not have to be convinced that their union leadership is corrupt. "The International officials are universally distrusted, regarded as thieves, fools, liars, criminals."

Many feel that Fitzsimmons and the government have made a deal—if he can push a poor master freight agreement on Teamster members, the government will not put any heat on Fitzsimmons for criminal violations.

A TDU member in Local 299, in Detroit, Pete Camarata, has declared his candidacy for President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, to be selected at a 1981 convention. Camarata, Jack Vlahovic, his running mate, and TDU, have filed suit to gain equal access to union publications, a move similar to court action which got the Miners for Democracy space in United Mineworkers' publications.

In many unions, top officers are elected directly by the entire membership. In others, like the United Auto Workers, delegates are elected, then sent to a convention to choose officers. The Teamsters pick their President at a convention, but, in a system set up by Jimmy Hoffa, delegates are picked by local presidents. Their only constraints are that they must choose officials who are in elective office.

Only about 5% of the delegates are elected directly by

PETE CAMARATA and DOUG ALLAN



the rank and file. Pete Camarata was one of these elected to attend the 1976 convention in Las Vegas. His was the loudest of a handful of voices in opposition to Fitzsimmons. He paid for it afterwards with a beating which did the Teamster hierarchy more harm than good, generating a *Readers' Digest* article that helped publicize TDU. At the 1981 convention TDU and PROD hope to have several hundred delegates, out of 2200.

Perhaps TDU's most important achievement so far has been the training of a network of rank and file leaders—the people who take their vacations to go to the TDU national convention, who put out the 20 local TDU papers, who get members down to the union hall for important votes. If TDU is successful, they will someday lead the Teamsters union. Also among them will be some of the leaders of a reborn union movement.

"I belonged to TURF (Teamsters United Rank and File)," says Doug Allan, for 23 years a Teamster in Los Angeles, Local 208. "A lot of people, including myself, believed that if we would get some great guy—get him elected—we got it made. As we gradually saw the way things were happening, I, and a lot of other people, came to see that that don't work. It had to be a democratic process of the people. We have what we call this secondary leadership kind of thing. Pete [Camarata] could quit, give up, die, or whatever tomorrow. It wouldn't affect TDU one bit. I could name a dozen people. We are no more educated or anything like that. We have enough knowledge of what's going on that we could take over what Ken or Pete or me or whoever is doing. We've gone with the position that one person is not going to save this union."

TURF was a Teamster reform group active in the early 70's, an attempt (that failed) to pull union activists and dissidents into one national organization. The strongest of the groups which became TURF was the 500 at 50 (\$500 pension at age 50) committee, started in Los Angeles. They linked up with other committees in Cleveland, Nashville, and elsewhere. The biggest chapter was Cleveland, where up to 200 people would go to union meetings wearing TURF jackets.

TURF, however, didn't have any direction, any program, any strategy. It was open to politicians who wanted to use it for their own ends. A former TURF officer is now one of Jackie Presser's (Cleveland Teamster official) right hand man. A former TURF Cleveland chapter president is now a business agent in Local 407 and considered one of the rottenest around.

The demoralizing effects of TURF still linger, according to one former TURF member, now a TDU activist. "Even years later in Cleveland, people would come up to us and say, 'Hey man, I like what you're doing, but I saw how TURF got misused. I think that same thing is probably going to happen to you.'"

The TDU constitution reads, "The object of this organization is to build a national, unified movement of rank and file Teamsters that is organized to fight for rank and file rights on the job and in the union." Unlike the Teamsters union, TDU is democratic. Resolutions are passed when a simple majority votes for

them. The highest policy-making body of TDU is its national convention, which attracted 500 Teamsters last October. The convention can change the constitution, set TDU policy, and elect a national steering committee to govern TDU between conventions. Officers of TDU, like co-chairpersons Doug Allan and Pete Camarata, are also elected at the convention.

From the beginning, TDU has had as its guiding policy that it wasn't out just to elect different people—that was part of the solution—but not the goal. The people who founded TDU believed in the wisdom and strength of the rank and file, and they have attracted a growing core of activists who believe the same thing. "A structure, and momentum, has been built up," says Paff, "that makes it very difficult for TDU leaders to desert."

TDU has also gotten wives involved in a big way. Some have become leaders, essential to the operation of Local TDU Chapters. Any spouse of a Teamster may join TDU.

Jim Watzek is excited by being in TDU—comparing contracts, studying the industry in which he works, piecing together company strategies, building TDU, building the union movement, beginning to feel that he has the power to change his life. "Everybody's

starting to get a pretty good look that the big companies are what's doing the rippin' off. People are starting to wake up, and it's going to be a long time to finally get the complete public educated to the fact of what's really happening."

It is the economic crisis that is pushing people like Watzek to become active in TDU. U.S. capitalism enjoyed a long period of prosperity after World War II because the U.S. came out of the war with its factories intact and a large international market for the goods it could produce. Companies could afford to grant workers large wage increases and improved working conditions and still make handsome profits. Facing competition now, from Germany and Japan in particular, American capitalism cannot afford to "buy off" American workers any longer.

This economic crisis, characterized by recession, inflation, and high levels of unemployment, has thrown the trucking industry into a crisis of its own. For example trucking firms rely heavily on bank loans and on credit from truck-producing companies and other suppliers. The Carter administration's "anti-inflation" program, with higher interest rates, will play havoc with the structure of the trucking industry.

Individual employers have no control over the economy, instead they turn to their workforce to solve

socialist, I belong to a group called the International Socialists. Many times I talk before a group where I've never been before I point out certain divisions that bureaucrats, or society, or bosses use to divide us, and one of the divisions I speak to is the division of politics. I mention what my own individual politics are and say that that's my own democratic right, just as yours is to be a born-again Christian or whatever. And I also raise that anyone who holds controversial views, whether it's left wing, right wing, or whatever, has a responsibility to keep them to themselves to a large degree within TDU. You have no right to use an organization that you help build to promote your own political beliefs. I think that's why we have succeeded in Western Pennsylvania.

I say that anytime you think I'm a detriment to the organization—I stand for election just like anybody else does.

TDU has gotten a lot of favorable publicity recently—The New York Times, Newsweek, local newspapers in virtually every major city. What sort of effect has this had on TDU?

Anytime you read about victories, even close victories, or well-fought defeats in a national magazine people feel a certain growth in self-confidence. "We're doing something. We're making things happen." While most of us wouldn't trust much of that media—we understand where it is coming from—when they're forced to recognize you and give you

an interview



with a socialist in TDU

Mel Packer, one of the founders of TDC and TDU, a member of its International Steering Committee, and a Teamster for 9 years, is a member of the International Socialists. He lives in Pittsburgh.

You're a socialist in TDU. Most people in TDU are not. Do you have problems with red-baiting? If so, how do you handle it?

Red-baiting is one of the oldest tricks in the book. It's used against people who've never heard the word "socialism" before and it's used against people who are open, flag-waving revolutionaries.

I don't think it's been so much of a problem in Pittsburgh, because from the beginning I told people that I'm a

their problems, trying all sorts of schemes to increase labor productivity. This pressure from the employers, and the unwillingness of union officials to put up a fight, gives TDU, PROD, and reform groups in other unions, impetus, and is partially responsible for their growth. TDU is a part of a general—though still small—response of the American working class to the crisis.

"The last 3 contracts in the Teamsters have been takeaways," says Doug Allan. "The first contract in the guys said, 'Well, I'm still working, what the heck.' The second contract we got the 24 hour strike taken away from us. Guys were starting to say, 'Man, this is a bunch of garbage, what is this?' The last time our contract was torn apart. The membership is getting tired of it. The rank and file will sit back so long and get shafted, until finally they'll get up and fight. That's what's happening in the Teamsters union, I feel."

TDU is small now, but is growing. Before the Flint election there was no TDU chapter in Pontiac, right next door. Now there are over 100 members there. That election had similar effects on TDU around the country. More and more, TDU'ers are beginning to refer to themselves as *the movement*.

Economic crises are not guaranteed to provoke a working class response. The union movement is weak in this country. No one wants to fight when they're likely to lose. Workers need to redevelop their organizations,

thousands to read that press, like they don't flock to read anything except what is established, and that which seems to have credibility. But eventually people do start picking up on things. Probably the best example today is the Shah of Iran.

For years and years people have been told that Iran is a great society, a democratic society. All of a sudden the line's changing a bit. The media is still praising the Shah at the same time saying that the people are throwing him out. That's not following a whole lot of working class people. Most of the people I talk to out in the streets know that the Shah was a bloody dictator plain and simple. They say that the whole thing that's going on with Iran is a farce. That the whole thing was about the oil corporations.

To go back a little bit further, Vietnam. It raised consciousness an awful lot in this country. I don't know very many former soldiers who think they were fighting for anything but Coca-Cola and IBM and Honeywell and everything else.

I think that people are developing some sort of new consciousness, not on a mass scale, but something's changing when an activist who's been in my local for 28 years, who's not a socialist, gets up at a TDU rally, and says, "I want you people to understand one thing. There are no more Vietnams. There are no more Koreas. We are the enemy. The working class in this country is the enemy of the corporations. They're coming after us. We have to fight back."

When he comes up with statements like that, and doesn't get red-baited, but gets applause from Teamsters, there's something happening out there.

Is one of you goals to transform the Teamsters union into a crusading union, socially, politically conscious?

Not only the Teamsters union, but a lot of other unions. I think that the example we set in TDU is important for other workers. We'd like to see the building of reform movements in all unions, to make them real democratic organizations of struggle.

Teamsters are a part of that. I want to build and strengthen that movement of working people in every way I can. I think TDU is a damn good way.

Some people think socialists want to set themselves up as preachers—I'll lead, you follow. Does this happen in TDU?

As a socialist, I have trust in the working class. We're willing to take our chances. We believe in people's intelligence, that people are clear-thinking individuals when given the opportunity to do so. We believe in people's potential for growth.

Left groups that set themselves up, or set up a rank and file group or community organization and keep it as a front group don't trust the working class. They have some kind of phoney vanguard theory. I think, that says that we have to do it for the working class, not with the working class.

rebuild the unions.

The Teamsters is different from other unions—the bureaucracy is monolithic, corrupt, has no pretensions of democracy, is unwilling to fight at all. Changing the union—so it'll fight back—is not easy. TDU and PROD are the only outlets for frustration, for dissent.

Those who run American industry try to get workers to compete with each other, to work beyond their physical capabilities, to weaken the unions. TDU is attempting to bring Teamsters together, to reduce competition between workers, to spread out the work, to strengthen the union.

The more they succeed—the more victories workers anywhere win, and see others win—the more they feel their potential power.

Victories require organization. They also spur organization. The ruling class operates on the basis of a class analysis. The working class is in the process of developing one.

During the miners' strike, TDU chapters in several cities helped organize support, collecting money and taking part in local rallies.

A TDU activist says that "TDU as a whole has gotten more committed even as it's grown. You'd expect that as it gets bigger and broader it should be more diluted, but as it gets bigger the people in it feel a little more self (cont. on page 25)

Preaching to people doesn't do it. Helping work with people to build a movement does do it. People don't change because you raise the banner of revolution. People grow in stages and levels. I grew that way, and just about everybody in this society grew that way. It takes very small steps to take very large steps. If you don't realize that, then you're never going to help build a workers' movement in this country.

What sort of progress do you think is being made in building that sort of class conscious workers' movement?

In the miners, steel, Teamsters, in union organizing in the south, workers are starting—just starting—to come to class consciousness. Look at the support the miners got against the government. Despite this right wing stuff, you see more people thinking in terms of economic class.

People come to greater class consciousness by fighting around the conditions that affect their lives. That's what I'm interested in. People begin to understand the need for unity. They begin to understand the need to fight for themselves, that no one else is going to do it for them, that only in mass organizations can they do it for themselves. That's how people come to be class conscious individuals, become part of class conscious organizations, and that's how they eventually become revolutionaries. I don't know any other way.

Abortion Right

The Hyde Amendment, passed in 1977, prohibits the use of federal money for abortion. Since it was passed, this

The Hyde Amendment, passed in 1977, prohibits the use of federal money for abortion. Since it was passed, this

rank and file reformism has been Local 299's substantial TDU contingent. Since 1976, TDU has brought a series of issues ranging from local by-laws reform to national contract campaigns into the local. Pushed by the several hundred active TDUs, Local 299 members generally, and the other organized caucuses especially, have become much more conscious of and active in union affairs. The previous three decades of Hoffa and then Fitzsimmons rule had done nothing to prepare the rank and file for this development.



Pete Karagozian

incumbents or the Concerned Teamsters, pre-election forecasts were more pessimistic than the outcome warranted. (Camarata received over 44% of the vote for Vice-President; Carothers over 43% for Recording Secretary.) TDU did suffer

Local 299 TDU emerges from the campaign stronger than ever before. TDU has more than doubled its electoral support since the 1977 election. The momentum is increasing.

Teicher's article is particularly interesting in revealing the government's attitude toward women. Solicitor General Wade McRee argued that Congress can

mittee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse). Teicher attended the Supreme Court session in which *McRae v. Harris* was heard. In this article, she recounts the arguments on both sides.

Teicher's article is particularly interesting in revealing the government's attitude toward women. Solicitor General Wade McRee argued that Congress can

on tric

...On the
ANNE TEICHER

...On trial ag
ANNE TEICHER

On the morning of April 21, 1980, *Harris v. McRae* was argued in the U.S. Supreme Court before a courtroom overflowing with lawyers, Congressmen, press and supporters on both sides of the issue. Some, including a carfull of CARSA members, had been waiting since 4:00 a.m. that morning. Demonstrators in support of McRae stood across from the Courthouse holding signs quoting Jude Dooling's decision, which declared the Hyde Amendment unconstitutional.

On the morning of April 21, 1980, *Harris v. McRae* was argued in the U.S. Supreme Court before a courtroom overflowing with lawyers, Congressmen, press and supporters on both sides of the issue. Some, including a carfull of CARASA members, had been waiting since 4:00 a.m. that morning. Demonstrators in support of McRae stood across from the Courthouse holding signs quoting Jude Dooling's decision, which declared the Hyde Amendment unconstitutional.

The argument in the nationwide class action suit to restore government funding for Medicaid abortions culminated

three years of hard and intensive work by a team of lawyers from the American Civil Liberties Union, the Center for Constitutional Rights, New York University Law School and Planned Parenthood. The argument provides the final opportunity for attorneys on both sides to present their case to the nine justices who will decide, once and for all, whether the government can exclude payment for medically-necessary abortions within a Medicaid program that covers all other medically-necessary services.